

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 NEW DE 09766 232122Z  
ACTION NEA-11

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-15 PM-05 SP-02 INR-10 PA-01 L-03  
/048 W

-----032751 232134Z /61

P R 231322Z JUN 78  
FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2399  
INFO AMCONSUL BOMBAY  
AMCONSUL CALCUTTA  
AMCONSUL MADRAS

C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 9766

STADIS//////////

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: OVIP (DESAI, MORARJI)  
SUBJECT: AN MEA VIEW OF DESAI VISIT

1. MEA JOINT SECRETARY ASRANI, WHO HAS JUST NOW RETURNED TO DELHI FROM U.S; GAVE ME HIS READING OF DESAI VISIT ON JUNE 23. I FOUND HIS REPORT OF PARTICULAR INTEREST BECAUSE TO DATE ONLY INFORMATION WE HAV HAD ARE PRESS ACCOUNTS AND BITS AND PICES PASSED US BY BRITISH EMBASSY. (IF THIS APPEARS PLAINTIVE, IT IS MEANT TO BE.)

2. IN ADDITION TO FACTUAL ACCOUNT OF PROCEEDINGS ASRANI MADE SOME OBSERVATIONS WHICH MAY BE OF INTEREST TO DEPARTMENT AS REFLECTING VIEWS, IMPRESSIONS AND, PERHAPS, MISCONCEPTIONS, OF A WORKING LEVEL INDIAN OFFICIAL WHO PARTICIPATED IN MOST OF THE TALKS.

3. ASRANI READ ME SEVERAL PARAGRAPHS OF THE REPORTING TELEGRAM SENT FROM NEW YORK TO INDIAN DIPLOMATIC POSTE. REPORT DESCRIBED VISIT AS HAVING TAKEN PLACE IN AN ATMOSPHERE MORE CORDIAL THAN HAS EXISTED FOR MANY YEARS IN INDO-U.S. RELATIONS. THE CLOSE  
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PERSONAL AND WORKING RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE PRESIDENT AND DESAI WAS EMPHASIZED, AND IT WAS NOTED THAT PRESIDENT HAD SHOWN MANY EVIDENCES OF HIS ESTEEM AND AFFECTION FOR DESAI, INCLUDING DEPARTURES FROM PROTOCOL PROCEDURES. THE REPORT ALSO NOTED THAT TALKS ON NUCLEAR ISSUE WERE CONDUCTED BY BOTH SIDES WITH "FRANKNESS, PATIENCE AND UNDERSTANDING".

4. ASRANI SAID MOST STRIKING ASPECT OF VISIT WAS THE OBVIOUS PERSONAL RAPPORT BETWEEN THE TWO LEADERS, WHICH WAS OBVIOUS TO BOTH SIDES AND HAD A BENEFICIAL EFFECT ON ATTITUDES OF BOTH INDIANS AND AMERICANS.

5. HE ALLOWED THAT JUNE 9 MEETING IN NEW YORK ON NUCLEAR ISSUE HAD GOTTEN OUT OF CONTROL TO THE POINT OF BEING A NEAR DISASTER. HE BLAMED SETHNA, ACCUSING HIM OF JUMPING FROM ISSUE TO ISSUE. THE SITUATION HAD BEEN RETRIEVED, ASRANI SAID, ONCE SETHNA WAS OUT OF THE DISCUSSIONS. HE LED ME TO BELIEVE THAT THE GOI HAD DELIBERATELY DECIDED AGAINST HAVING SETHNA STAY ON IN WASHINGTON FOR THE JUNE 11-13 DISCUSSIONS. (ASRANI HAD EARLIER SHOWN SOME ANIMUS TOWARD SETHNA WHOM HE ONCE DESCRIBED AS " AN UNGUIDED MISSILE").

6. AFTER PASSING ME A COPY OF A U.S. PAPER PREPARED IN RESPONSE TO NUCLEAR QUESTIONS POSED BY SHANKAR AND SETHNA DURING THE JUNE 9 TALKS, ASRANI STATED THAT THE GOI HAD NO DOUBT THAT THE SUPPLY OF ENRICHED URANIUM FOR TARAPUR WOULD CONTINUE AT LEAST UNTIL SEPTEMBER 1979. HE DID, HOWEVER, ACKNOWLEDGE THAT A DIALOGUE OF SORTS WOULD HAVE TO CONTINUE IN THE INTERVAL. AS IS HIS WONT, HE ARGUED THAT THE NUCLEAR ISSUE WAS MULTILATERAL, RATHER THAN BILATERAL, AND RAISED THE HOPE THAT EVENTS WOULD FORCE THE U.S. TO AMEND ITS NON-PROLIFERATION POLICY.

7. ACCORDING TO ARANI THE QUESTION OF THE REINTRODUCTION OF  
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THE PEACE CORPS INTO INDIA WAS DEAD, ALTHOUGH U.S. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE IN OTHER FORMS WAS WELCOME. HE SAID THAT DESAI'S REFERENCE TO THE POSSIBLE RESUMPTION OF "THE EXPERIMENT" WAS COMPLETELY PUZZLING TO THE INDIAN DELEGATION AND PROBABLY MEANT ONLY THAT DESAI WAS SHOWING A WILLINGNESS TO HAVE YOUNG AMERICANS COME TO INDIA AS LONG AS THEY DID NOT COME UNDER THE NAME OF THE PEACE CORPS.

8. ASRANI SAID THE ONLY SURPRISE IN THE TALKS WAS THE DEGREE OF CONCERN WHICH THE U.S. EXPRESSED FOR THE PROBLEMS OF PAKISTAN IN THE WAKE OF THE AFGHAN COUP, AND OUR STRONG DESIRE TO DO SOMETHING FOR THE PAKISTANIS. NOTING THAT HE HAD BEEN INFORMED IN PRIVATE SIDE TALKS THAT THE U.S. WOULD NOT MAKE A-4'S OR A-7'S AVAILABLE TO PAKISTAN, ASRANI MADE THE PREDICTABLE REMARK THAT ANY ARMS TRANSFER TO PAKISTAN WAS A MATTER OF GREAT CONCERN TO INDIA.

9. THESS QUIBBLES ASIDE, ASRANI WAS CLEARLY HAPPY ABOUT THE VISIT AND ITS BENEFICIAL EFFECT ON INDO-U.S. RELATIONS. HE THOUGHT THE NUCLEAR ISSUE, ON WHICH THE INDIAN SCIENTIFIC COMMUNITY HAD BEEN QUITE PREPARED TO FORCE A SHOWDOWN, HAD BEEN SUCCESSFULLY CONTAINED, AND THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE PRESIDENT AND DESAI GREATLY

STRENGTHENED.  
BLOOD

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## Message Attributes

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